

House Republican Press Release

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Rep. Harkins, Sen Debicella: Appropriations Committee Budget Bad for Economy, Job Creation



Will Accelerate Connecticut's Population Loss; Hurt Middle Class

The budget adopted by the Democrat-controlled Appropriations Committee will lead to major tax increases that will curb economic growth and make it more difficult to attract new employers to Connecticut, state Representative John A. Harkins, R-Stratford, and state Senator Dan Debicella, R-Shelton, said today.

The biennial budget, which was approved by the Appropriations Committee Thursday, would increase spending by \$1.7 billion in the first year and by \$500 million in the second year, for an overall increase of 16 percent over two years, said Representative Harkins and Senator Debicella, who both serve on the Appropriations Committee and opposed the spending package.

"The spending increases proposed in this budget are unacceptable," Representative Harkins said. "They will lead to another major round of tax increases that Connecticut's overburdened taxpayers simply cannot afford. Our state already bears one of the heaviest tax burdens in the country. If the budget adopted by the Appropriations Committee's Democrat majority is anything like the final version that will be considered by the General Assembly within the next few weeks, it will be bad news for our state's economy and for our efforts to make Connecticut more attractive to employers."

"It's insulting to the citizens of our state that the Democrat majority would claim that this budget provides tax relief when in fact they are increasing overall spending by about 16 percent. Stratford residents actually would shoulder an even heavier tax burden while more of our money will be used to bloat the treasuries of a few big cities whose leaders will not be held accountable for how they spend our money," Representative Harkins said.

"A 10.5 percent increase is irresponsible. If you raised your family budget by 10 percent a year, you would soon be bankrupt. If the state increases its spending by 10 percent, you can be sure of one thing - a massive tax increase. This is the type of radical proposal you get when a party controls the legislature by two-thirds. The Democrats are out of control and hurting the families of Stratford," Senator Debicella said.

"This budget threatens our efforts to encourage out of state companies to move to Connecticut and create new jobs," Representative Harkins said. "Too many employers

already are leaving our state and high taxes are one of the main reasons. Instead of providing tax relief that will encourage economic growth and improve the business climate, this budget will perpetuate and worsen the problem.”